

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A peritoneal dialysis catheter for insertion into the abdominal cavity of a patient for delivering and withdrawing fluid from a patient comprising:

a catheter body having a proximal portion, a distal tip portion, and a first longitudinally extending lumen configured to deliver fluid into the abdominal cavity;

first and second side openings formed in an outer wall of the distal portion of the catheter body adjacent the distal tip portion, the first and second side openings being in fluid communication with the first lumen and configured for passage of fluid therethrough; and

~~a stiffening insert positioned in the distal tip portion, the stiffening insert having a first stiffness greater than a second stiffness of the distal tip portion to facilitate entry in to the abdominal cavity, the stiffening insert having a lumen therethrough communicating with the first lumen.~~

a stiffening member removably positionable within the central lumen and having a lumen for receiving a guidewire therethrough.

2. (original) The catheter of claim 1, wherein the catheter body is flexible and at least a distal section is adapted to form a coil shape within the abdominal cavity of a patient.

3. (canceled)

4. (original) The catheter of claim 2, wherein the distal tip portion has a bullet nose configuration.

5. (amended) The catheter of claim 3 1, wherein the distal tip portion includes an internal shoulder providing a stop for a stiffening member inserted through the first lumen of the catheter body.

6. (currently amended) The catheter of claim 1, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein ~~the stiffening member removably positionable within the central lumen, the stiffening member~~ is mountable to the proximal portion of the catheter and ~~terminating~~ terminates proximally of a distalmost tip of the catheter body, ~~the stiffening member including a lumen for receiving a guidewire therethrough.~~

7. (original) The catheter of claim 6, further comprising third and fourth side openings in the outer wall spaced axially from the first and second side openings.

8. (original) The dialysis catheter of claim 6, wherein torquing the stiffening member places the catheter body in tension to stretch the catheter body, thereby reducing at least a portion of the outer diameter of the catheter body during insertion.

9. (original) A catheter for delivering and withdrawing blood from a patient's body, the catheter comprising:

a catheter body having an outer wall, a distal portion, a lumen extending from a proximal portion of the catheter body to the distal portion and configured to receive a guidewire therein and to allow blood passage therethrough, the catheter body being flexible and having a distal section having a coil shape;

at least two side openings in the outer wall of the catheter body, each side opening being in fluid communication with the lumen; and

a stiffening member removably positionable within the lumen of the catheter, the stiffening member mountable to a proximal portion of the catheter and terminating proximally of a distalmost tip of the catheter body, the stiffening member including a lumen for receiving a guidewire therethrough.

10. (original) The catheter of claim 9, wherein the stiffening member has a threaded portion on a proximal end portion for mounting the proximal end of the stiffening member to the catheter and for torquing the stiffening member to stretch the catheter body.

11. (original) The catheter of claim 9, wherein the stiffening member has a threaded portion at its distal end portion for mounting the distal end portion to the catheter body.

12. (original) The catheter of claim 9, wherein the stiffening member has an abutment tip for abutting a shoulder formed internally in the distal portion of the catheter body.

Claims 13-19 (canceled)

20. (new) The catheter of claim 1, further comprising a stiffening insert positioned in the distal tip portion, the stiffening insert having a first stiffness greater than a second stiffness of the distal tip portion to facilitate entry in to the abdominal cavity, the stiffening insert having a lumen therethrough communicating with the first lumen.

21. (new) The catheter of claim 1, wherein the stiffening member has a threaded portion on a proximal end portion for mounting the proximal end of the stiffening member to the catheter.

22. (new) The catheter of claim 6, wherein the stiffening member has a threaded portion on a proximal end portion for mounting the proximal end of the stiffening member to the catheter.

23. (new) The catheter of claim 6, wherein the catheter body is flexible and at least a distal section of the catheter is adapted to form a coil shape within the abdominal cavity of a patient.

24. (new) The catheter of claim 22, wherein the catheter body is flexible and at least a distal section of the catheter is adapted to form a coil shape within the abdominal cavity of a patient.

25. (new) The catheter of claim 1, wherein the stiffening member has an abutment tip for abutting an internal region in the distal portion of the catheter body.

26. (new) The catheter of claim 20, wherein the first and second side openings are positioned proximally of the stiffening insert.